# TEMPLE ENTRY BY "HARIJANS,"

BY

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1. The question of temple entry by 'Harijans' is a very important one. It has evoked a considerable amount of controversy. Men whose sincerity and learning cannot be disputed are found ranged on both sides. Such a question certainly deserves to be analysed and viewed from all possible standpoints. No purpose is served by one cavilling at the other, or even suspecting the bonafides of the other. The question should not be approached with any fixed ideas, but deserves to be dispassionately considered. Again, it should be judged on its own merits, shorn of all political repercussions. When political reasons are disavowed by those supporting the movement, there is no use going behind their declarations and finding motives. They are putting their case on what they call high religious principles. We should certainly consider them. We should carefully consider also, whether it is possible to find a way out of the impasse honourable to both. So, I propose to deal with the subject *more as a student thereof*, and I fully believe, a good deal of inaccuracies and misapprehensions that now seem to exist, will be dispelled thereby. My statements are based on existing text books, and information given by learned pandits whose knowledge is unquestionable.

2. The first question that naturally arises for consideration is *the origin of temples*. The next will be their *construction, and the consecration* of images therein according to the *Agamas*. Whether such *Agamas prevent any sections* of people, and if so how and when, will be the third topic of consideration. Next in order will be taken up the question of *Harijans and into what category they fall. The legal aspect* will next be considered. Then we shall be able to view the position in its proper bearings, and can attempt *to solve it*.

## I. The origin of Temples.

(a) It is stated by some that temples were unknown to the Vedas. It must be conceded that the forms of worship in the Vedic age comprehended offerings, prayers and praise; and such worship had been more or less domestic. The deities often mentioned as objects of worship are Agni, Indra, Surya and Maruts. There is not found much mention of temples and worship therein. But now and anon, stone structures and stone-built cities are found mentioned, as also Gramas or villages. Bricks are mentioned as used in the construction of *vedis*, or altars though it is not clear whether they were baked or not. A remarkable knowledge of scientific measurements and geometrical figures is disclosed in the erection of 'yagna sala' or the sacrificial booth or hall. So whether temples existed or not, the vedic people must have been quite competent to erect temples.

Our scholars and pandits affirm that idols were known to the vedic religion. Mr. Max Muller says that vedic religion knows them not. But Dr. Bollenson in his V volume of Muir's Sanskrit Texts is equally emphatic the other way. Mr. Muir is more inclined towards Dr. Bollenson's view. It is however un[illegible] [illegible] pursue the subject further.

(b) It must be, and in fact is, freely admitted by all, that in the later Vedic literature, there is unequivocal evidence of the existence of Gods and temples raised for them. Pandit Saraswati quotes *Adbhuta Brahmana of the Sama Veda*, and states that the quaking of temples, the laughing, singing, dancing and twinkling of divine images are evil portents. He also quotes *Adbhutadyaya in the Kausika Sutra* relating to the *Atharva Veda* to the same effect. A learned pandit from Conjeevaram told me, that one among the Ashtothara Upanishads contains full details of a Sivalinga and its modes of worship and declares that none should live where no *Sivalingam* is found installed (Vide Basmajapala in ditto.)

(c) There are scholars who are able to give ready references from the *Dharma Sutras* of Gautama, Apasthamba, by which temples are described as places which destroy sin, by which are ordained that all should pass temples with their right turned towards them, and by which they are prevented from so sleeping as to stretch the feet towards them. (Gautama Chap. 19, S. 14 and Apasthamba I, P. 11. K. 30. S. 20 and 22).

(d) *Manu* Chap. 4 Verse 39 also says "By a mound of earth, by a cow, by an idol etc., let him pass with his right hand towards them." It obviously cannot refer to an idol kept in a corner of one's house. The mound of earth, the cow, and idol are spoken of together. They must refer to things existing outside, as one passes by in a village etc. Verse 153 in the same chapter, also enjoins upon all to visit the images of deities on the dark lunar days and other monthly parvenas. In chap. 8, Verse 248, he says "Wells etc., and temples of God should be made on the common limits". In Ch[illegible], Verse 280, he says "Those who break open the temple of a deity.........let him without hesitation

destroy." In verse 285 "breaker of an idol......500 panams fine." In chap. II Verse 26; he says "That sinful man who through covetousness seizes the properties of gods, feeds in another world on the leavings of vultures." Learned pandits are able to give various references also in *Yagnavalkya*, (see Chap. 2 Verse 273). Narada (Chap 4. Verse 4.) It is, I think, unnecessary to multiply references further.

(e) When we come to *Ithihasas*, sage Valmiki's *Ramayana*, contains some references to temples and temple worship. I shall give a few only. In Ayodhyakanda, 25th sarga, in bidding farewell to Sri Rama, Kousalyadevi blesses him and prays as follows:- "May the Gods whom you worship in 'Devalayas' (temples), and the *rishis* (sages) protect thee". In the 67th sarga, it is stated "*utsavams* in Devalayas (temples) will not be celebrated if there is no king, people will not bathe in sacred waters; these two are for the benefit of the King ... ... people will not go to temples with flowers and other offerings." Vide also 100th Sarga in ditto. Everybody must be familiar with the story of the Dog and the Brahmin that beat it, in the Uttararamayanam. The dog stated to Sri Rama that it got that low life because it was once a temple servant.

Taking the *Mahabharatam* of sage Veda Vyasa, Pancharatra Vibhava is described in Adyaya 348 in Santhi Parva. Similar references to temples and temple worship can also be found. So the argument that temples and the Sastras relating thereto are later-day creations cannot be reasonably accepted.

(f) Coming to the puranas, in *Srimad Bhagavatam* are found copious references to temples. In fact, in 73rd Adyaya in Dasamaskanda is de[illegible] beautiful language the *yathra* of Sri Balarama, who is stated to have visited

the shrines of Srinivasa in Thirupathi, of Narsimhamoorthy in Sholingapuram, of Varadaraja in Conjeepuram, of Renganatha in Srirangam, of Soundararaja in Alagarkoil, of Padmanabha in Trivandrum (Travancore) and of Selvapillai in Thirunarayanapuram (Mysore State). In 10th and 11th Adyayas, in Ekadasaskanda, detailed reference to temple worship according to Pancharatra Agamas is made when Sri Krishna gives *Upadesa* to *Uthava*. In 17th adyaya of the same, three forms of *archavigraham* or images of worship i.e., of chala, Dharu and Swarnadhiloga are mentioned. It is stated that by consecrating his Archavigraham one will become a King, by building a *prakara* and *mahamantapa* of the temple he will attain the three worlds and by doing all of them he will attain, 'Saroopyam" or oneness with Him. As for other *Puranas*, they contain elaborate references to them. Vide Vishnu, Agni, Yama, Skanda, Matsya, and also other Sthala puranas.

Thus far, I have attempted to show that images of Gods, temples and temple worship according to Agamas existed from very ancient times. It must have been several thousands of years. It is unnecessary to fix the exact dates in respect thereof.

**II. The construction of temples and the consecration of images therein, is the second topic that I propose to consider.**

(a) I am told by the Sthapathis that are doing work in Sri Mayuranathaswami temple at Mayavaram, and Pandit Gopinatha Sastry supports it, that, as in the case of houses, so in the case of temples, the *auspicious time* for the construction of temples is elaborately provided for in the Sastras. Pandit Saraswati quotes many directions from Matsyapurana and Pancharatra to the effect that certain

months, asterisms and conjunctions are recommended, while others are condemned. See also Raghunandana's *jyotistatwam.* There was a recent controversy here about a Kumbabishegam in a temple. Various astrologers had gathered together and were able to cite extensively about the auspicious *muhurthams* etc. for a temple Kumbabishegam from their books, such as Brihatjataka and others.

(b) *The selection of a site for a temple* depends upon many rules. Such rules are also common for houses. Silpa sastras which our Sthapathis are able to quote contain elaborate details. The sites to be chosen are divided into good, medium, and bad, and are described vividly (see Hayasirsha, Pancharatra, Grihya sutras of Gobila, and Ashwalayana etc. quoted by Pandit Saraswati). It is stated in Matsyapurana that the ground must be ploughed and seeds thrown upon the same. If they germinate in 3, 5 or 7 days the soil is habitable in a descending degree, but if they take more than 7 days, the ground ought to be avoided as unsuitable.

(c) There are laid down other rules which *regulate the location of particular deities.* Thus it is ordained that Vishnu must be installed within the village or town *facing the East.* Narasimha's temple must be so built with its face turned from the village or town. Lapses from such rules are said to result in disastrous consequences. Mr. Ganapathi Iyer refers to them also in his work.

(d) We next go to *the actual building.* First *the soil is purified* by ploughing. Then seeds are sown and cows are allowed to graze. It is again plouged thereafter. The cardinal points are next ascertained to give the building an auspicious aspect. Then follow what are called the

*Vastuyaga ceremonies* i. e. *purification ceremonies*, accompanied *with the recitation of Vedic hymns.* The foundation stone ceremony, or Sila-nyasa is next gone through. Various directions are given also as to the *selection of materials for the building.* Thus the building goes on.

(e) Temples must consist of certain *parts and proportions.* We have thus the Garbagraha, Arthamantapa, Mahamantapa. The arthamantapa is divided into 4 parts called Antarala, Mukamantapa, Snapana Mantapa, and Vrista Mantapa; Mahamantapa is sub-divided into Bahir Mantapa and Nritha Mantapa. Their dimensions are carefully laid down, as also their proportions to each other. Such dimensions and proportions ought not to be exceeded. Ganapathi Iyer sees no harm if they so exceed, but Pandit Saraswati seems to think otherwise.

(f) There are *two kinds of images* described by our elders, and mentioned in sacred texts. The first is called self-revealed. The other is said to be created. When Vishnu has placed himself on earth in stone or wood for the benefit of man, that is called self-revealed. When images are consecrated by the process of *prathishta,* they are said to be created.

(g) We find mentioned some *classifications of images* such as *Chala, Dharu* and *swarnadhiloga* (clay, wood, stone, metal). Herein again elaborate rules in the matter of their selection are laid down.

(h) Silpasastras abound in rules relating to the *constructions of images.* They consist even of minute details. Every one must be aware how our ancient images are looked upon as perfect masterpieces of art by modern, western artist and scholars. In fact the idols of many of

our gods that are not in use in temples are being purchased by western scholars or merchants. Recently, we had to dismiss a trustee in a temple for having sold an idol of Nataraja presumably to a foreigner of Germany. Dire consequences are predicted if there is any even the slightest flaw, or break in the image intended for dedication.

(j) Then the images so turned out by the silpis are *purified* with some preliminary ceremonies. It is known as *adhivasa*. We are familiar with the *adhivasa* mantapam. On a particular auspicious day the image is carried to the hall of ablution, or snanamantapa with incantations of sacred hymns. Certain *ceremonies are done for purification*. Then *sankalpa* is done. I extract it in full as it is important. "On this day of ... ... etc. etc, ... I etc. etc. ... being desirous of obtaining ... *for causing the presence of the divine emanation in this image* shall perform the prathishta of the image of such and such divinity." Then the sankalpadhar requests the sacrificial priests and the Acharya to begin their respective functions *to achieve the above object*. To be the Acharya, various qualifications are necessary. He must be well versed in the sacred literature, the Agamas, Vaikanasa, Pancharatra etc. and Vastuvidya and further be a very devout worshipper of that divinity. Then the ablution ceremonies are performed for the image with recitations of Vedic sacred hymns. Then follow a most important ceremony called the *Prana Prathishta* or *vivification ceremony*. It is not proper to detail them. But I may give the effect thereof. *Following the tantras,* certain *mystic syllables are chanted* and they are followed by an invocation by which *the image is vivified with the vital spark of divinity which is made to inhere in it for all time*. It is worth[illegible] special note that at every turn only *Vedic hymns with particular*

*prayogams* are chanted, in achieving this object. By this process or ceremony *an inanimate piece of wood, stone or metal is made to live with divine life and lustre*. Thus the image is installed and other rituals follow to complete the process. Then the image so vivified is *worshipped every day.*

(k) It is not necessary to describe in detail the normal type of daily continued worship in a temple. The sweeping of the temple, the removal of previous day's offerings, the abishegam to the idols, the alankara with fresh flowers and clothes and the respectful offerings of oblations of cooked or uncooked food with flower and water etc. and other like-practices are familiar to all. But at every step *Vedic* mantras are chanted and tantric prayogams occur. It is also worthy of note, that "the deity is conceived as a living being" and is treated in the same way "as the master of the house would be treated by his humble servants" to use Sir Ashutosh Mukerjee's words. There are also special occasions and festivals but it is not necessary to dilate on them.

( l ) Our Alwars aud Acharyas who lived thousands of years back have sung in ecstatic language about the *divine living grace* of such consecrated images. They have prayed even for being turned into inanimate objects such as a stepping stone in a temple so that they can ever be present and receive the loving effulgent grace of such images. To such consecrated images, Sri Balarama journeyed and paid homage. We also believe it. We pray. We take vows. Our prayers are often heard and our vows are cheerfully fulfilled. So the authority of the Agamas, Pancharatra, Vaikanasa etc. which provide for such consecration can hardly be disputed. The efficacy of the mantras contained therein can hardly be denied. One has to read the books of such western scholars as Sir John

Woodroffe to know how proud they have felt of our tantric and mantric literature.

**III. Prevention of temple entry in certain cases and under certain conditions will be next considered.**

(a) It is a matter well known to all that *repurification ceremonies* are prescribed if the worship is neglected even for a day. Similarly, if the image is defiled by the touch of an impure substance or animal, or if it falls in a contaminated place, certain other ceremonies are ordained to be gone through by way of purification.

(b) Similarly, we find that it is ordained that women and others not invested with yagnopaveetha or the sacred thread should *not touch the images*, and if they do so certain purification ceremonies must be gone through. None but Archakas and Gurukkals can *enter the Garbagraha* or do worship.

(c) It is a matter of common knowledge that in obedience to sastras, whoever is *under pollution is prevented* from entering the temple irrespective of caste or creed. Similarly we find that *women in their courses or recently confined* ought not to enter any temple. A *Brahmin who marries a widow* becomes a Pathitha and as such cannot enter the sanctum sanctorum (vide I. L. R. 13. Madras 293).

(d) We find that in many temples *oil mongers, potters, barbers and dhobies* are prevented from going beyond the Dwajasthambam in temples, on the ground of their impurity, by the Agamas comtrolling them.

The *shanars* were prevented according to Agama sastras from entering the temple of Kamudi (vide I. L. R. 31. Madras, 236).

(e) Thus are found various restrictions in reference to various persons and under certain conditions. It is not a question of any preferential treatment. It is simply a question of obeying the sastraic injunctions.

(f) Similarly are found rules, in Kamika etc., Agamas, in Pancharatra and Vaikanasa authorities, *preventing 'also the chandalas'* from entering even the 'Gopuram' or the first tower in a temple. That such texts exist, none can dispute. (Vide Nirvachanapaddati and Professor Scherad's translation of Pancharata Samhita).

(g) It is argued by a few that such texts are only *directory and not mandatory*. But according to the Mimamsa rules of interpretation, as also of other well recognised canons, if a rule exists by which a particular act is prevented from being done, then the said rule shall prevail over others. So, it must be held to be *mandatory* only.

**IV. It now remains to find out whether chandalas existed, and if so whether the 'Harijans' are chandalas as contemplated by the Agamas etc.**

(a) It is a matter well known to all that the Srutis, Smritis, Ithihasas and Puranas lay down the existence of four castes, namely, Brahma, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. They also refer to a class called 'chandala'–see Brihadaranyaka Upanishad chap. 4. Adyaya 3. Taittriya Pramana Astaka 3. Prasna 4., Rudra. Anuvaka 4. etc. and Chandogya Upanishad, Adyaya 5. Each caste should marry only within itself, and the off-spring of such marriages were called 'Sajatiya'. A higher caste male was however permitted to wed a female of the lower caste. The offspring were called Anulomas, and they were of six groups. The lower caste male was not permitted to marry a female of the higher caste.

(b) Of course, the urge of passions could not be prevented. The off-spring of such interdicted marriages were called 'Prathilomas'. They were also of six groups. The last three were low. Among them the off-spring of a sudra born to a Brahmin woman was called a *chandala* and he was the lowest. (See Manu Chap. 10 Verse 12, 16). *Manu* in chap. 10 verses 51 to 54 states as follows:– " Chandalas must live outside the town or village, their sole wealth must be dogs and asses; their clothes must be the clothes of deceased; their dishes for food, broken pots; they should marry within themselves: they must not walk in cities etc, by nights; by day they may walk about for work: they shall carry the corpse of everyone that dies etc. " In chap. 5 Verse 85 he says " He who *touches a chandala, a woman in her courses, an outcaste, a corpse* or one who has touched a corpse is made pure by bathing. " This shows that they were considered as *untouchables*. To the same effect are found writings by *Yagnavalkya*. I recently came across a book published under the auspices of the Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt at Kumbakonam. Therein are quoted in extenso various references arriving to the same conclusion from *Devala, Vyagrapada, Angiras, Samvarta, Prajapathi, Vyagra, Vishnu, Bodhayana, Parasara, Apasthamba, Vyasa, Vasishta* and other writers. When we go to *Ithihasas*, we find in Srimad *Ramayana*, Balakanda, that King Thrisanku was cursed by the sons of sage Vasishta to become a chandala, and that he was at once transformed into one, and that seeing him in such a condition his ministers and subjects ran away from him. In *Mahabharata*, Anusasana Parva, 77th Adyaya, Bishmacharya tells the King Dharmaputra how chandalas sprang up. In Santi Parva also reference to chandalas is found. Having thus proved the existence of chandalas, we have *next to find out whether the 'Harijans' are of that class*. Here we are on difficult ground. I shall concern myself with those known as

Pariahs, and similar other sects that are found in the Tanjore District and who go by the name of Panchamas or Adi-Dravidas. It need hardly be stated that the Prathiloma castes intermarried and grew in numbers and became likewise low and untouchable.

(c) It is an undisputable fact that such Adi Dravidas had always been regarded by others as being outside the pale of the four castes, and that they had uniformly accepted that position. They were never regarded by any as one of the four castes, nor did they ever claim to be such. No person by personal cognition knows in what caste he is born. Nor can he know it. He is only told of it by others. He is treated as such also by others. He then lays claim thereto. It is impossible to demonstrate it physically.

(d) The occupation that Manu assigns to the chandalas is found generally to fit in with that of Adi-dravidas. Their residence, their food, surroundings and their unclean habits, etc. are also found broadly speaking to tally. Further such things are not found to agree with any other section of people.

(e) Taking again the disqualification of untouchablity, they must admit that they had never been ordinarily touched by the four castes. They simply moved off when they saw the others approach. They had never protested. Manu and others speak of chandalas as being under that ban and it fits them.

(f) Similarly they had never entered any Agamic or thanthraic temples, nor had they ever claimed any right to do so. According to the sastras, chandalas had been so prevented.

Mr. Thurston extracts from Sonnerat's voyage to the East India 1774—1781, the condition and occupation of

Pariahs. It is exactly what Manu had described long ago, to a large degree.

(g) So judged from various standpoints, it is possible to conclude that they come under the category of chandalas. There is yet *another important point* to be noted. The inherent disqualification that I had mentioned supra had been found to exist for several thousands of years. Though our scholars and pandits do not accept the data as correct, still, taking even the version of Sir William Jones, Manu must have lived about 3000 years ago. Could it be imagined for a moment that these panchamas etc. would have allowed themselves to suffer under such bans for such thousands of years if they had had even an iota of a claim to the contrary? Were there not great scholars and seers in days of old who considered mankind as one, and with greater love and sympathy? Kingdoms trembled before their approach. By their masterful yogic powers they could make and unmake things. Not one among them is found to have protested against or ever thought of removing the ban.

(h) Take again the *historic instances* of the lives of highly evolved men in the community of panchamas. Saint Nandanar who ultimately merged himself in the divine effulgence of the Lord behaved himself like a chandala. He moved off when others approached. He did not enter the temple. He worshipped, and devoutly, from without. He claimed not the removal of any such bans. If such bans had been improperly imposed by any aggrandising caste, he would have cast them off and led his followers out of it. The same can be said of the other famous men of the same community.

(j) Often we read that the great *Acharya Ramanuja* gave them certain privileges and honours on certain

occasions. We are told that in the Melakote temple they can enter for three days as a result thereof. If the great Ramanuja had thought in the least that the bans were unjust or unsastraic, he would have fearlessly removed them, and not suffered the so-called inequity to exist. If he had allowed an occasional privilege, does it not prove the existence of the rule, instead of the contrary?

(k) Thus we can conclude that they belong to the chandala category. It follows therefore that they cannot be allowed to enter the temples, regulated by Agamas or Pancharatra or Vaikanasa sastras in the matter of rituals and worship therein. I have discussed above only the religious aspect of the question. I propose to discuss yet another aspect infra i.e. the *legal aspect.*

**V. Can any one compel another to admit him into his house, or to show him honours therein? Can any one ask the legislature either, to do the above things because he is not able to achieve it?**

I believe the answer will be an emphatic 'no'. Similarly the temples were intended and set up and endowed *for use only by the four castes.* They are no doubt called public. But they are public only in a restricted sense, namely, that the four castes can resort to them without restriction and always for worship. They were never intended for the others i.e. chandalas etc., nor can they ever claim any interest in them. In fact in a recent case before the Madras High Court, Krishnan Pandalai, J. has defined 'public' as follows:—

"When a temple is proved to be public what that prima facie means is, that it exists for the benefit of the whole body of Hindus of the *four main castes* who form occording to the Agamas the temple-going community."

We have it from Srimath Bagavatam that image worship was founded in Threthayugam, when disputes arose among men who had then been divided into four castes and who were disputing about relative inferiority and superiority, *in order that they might worship God in common image.* Thus temples were founded and were intended for the worship by all the four castes only. In fact during Prana Prathishta of an idol only the four castes are assigned places in Him. This accounts for the chandalas having their own temples, gods and goddesses. They are demon worshippers and have nothing in common with the others.

If the premises are granted, it would follow that *the four castes have a sort of proprietory interest in the temples.* They are entitled to so worship therein that their worship may be fruitful. They are entitled to see that their object of worship viz., the vivified idol is not polluted by the entrance of others who are likely to cause pollution. If so, can others claim to share equal rights? I am afraid that as in the case of individual property, so also in ths case of castes' property, *no interference* by others will be *permissible.* Once you drive the thin end of the wedge, there is no knowing where you stop. I don't mean to characterise the present movement as intended to drive the wedge, but it has that potential power and there is no use closing our eyes to that. That eminent Judge Sir. T. Muthuswami Iyer, writing about a Hindu temple, observed as follows in I.L.R. 13, Madras. 293. "Hindu temples being religious institutions founded, endowed and *maintained for the benefit of those sections of the Hindu community who conform to certain recognised usages as those of the castes for whose benefit such temples are* by immemorial usage dedicated as places of worship, the *persons* who conform to such usages stand to the managers for the time being in *the relation of cestui qui truste.*" Another eminent judge with progressive ideas

of reform, Sir T. Sadasiva Iyer, observed in 27, Madras Law Journal, 253 as follows:— "*It is clear that temples were intended for the worship of people belonging to the four castes.*" He quotes from Agamas how the low castes such as pariahs etc., should content themselves with the sight of the Gopuram. In the Kamudi case their Lordships Benson and Moore JJ. observed as follows:- "According to Agama sastras, which are received as authoritative even on worshippers in such temples, entry into the place where the ritual prescribed by these sastras prevails is prohibited ... ... No doubt many shanars have won for themselves by education, industry etc., respectable positions as Vakils, traders and merchants. It is natural to feel sympathy for their efforts to obtain social recognition and to rise to what is regarded as a higher form of worship: *but such sympathy will not be increased by unreasonable and unfounded pretensions, and in their efforts to rise they must not invade established rights of other castes. They have temples of their own and are numerous and strong enough to raise themselves along their own lines without appropriating the institutions of others*" To use the above felicitous language, I can say that the present movement is nothing but an attempt to appropriate the institutions of others, and cannot be looked on with equanimity. No one objects to their political elevation. In fact one would be willing even to fight for it.

## VI. What then is the solution ?

It is for learned men on both sides to sit together and discuss the matter openly and fearlessly. The Panchamas may be asked to erect their own temples or as in Malabar a separate idol viz., Kshetrapalan may be set up outside for them. If old examples are to guide us we can consider

them. At Melcote in Mysore we are told that Sri Ramanuja gave them the privilege of entering the temple for three days during a festival possibly as a *quid pro quo* for their services, and that thereafter the temple is ceremonially purified. At Sriperambadur we are told that in return for having sheltered an image during a Muhammadan raid they are given certain privileges in going round with the processions. In pulling cars of idols at great festivals we see that they are freely allowed and they mix with others. Necessity is the mother of invention. So, can it be too much to hope by such humble individuals like myself that a via media by which they can be allowed on certain stated occasions to go as far as a certain specified place in the temple to offer their worship may be found? The temple and the idol can be purified ceremonially thereafter. Of course it will entail extra cost but it cannot be helped. I have said what I felt. I should have achieved my object if I had stimulated others to think also and arrive at a conclusion fitting with the sastras and honourable to all concerned.